

EXHIBIT 14  
DATE 1-25-07  
HB Comm Med

January 25 th 2007

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee:

For the record, I am Shyla Patera. I am employed by North Central Independent Living Services located in Black Eagle, Montana. North Central Independent Living Services is disability advocacy agency. We strive to maximize independence, community participation and the freedom of choice for all Montanans with disabilities. I am also here as a Montanan with a disability who uses self directed personal assistance services. These Services have allowed me to become a full time employee. I can participate in My community the way I want!! Somedays, that means attending meetings and giving my opinion and other days it means going home to my apartment lounging around. Without Self Direct services, I could not function effectively in Great Falls or any other community.

I want other citizens to have the same access to personal assistance services that I have . As a consumer, disability advocate and a citizen, I plan on staying active in community for a long ,long time! In fact, I do not want live in a nursing home. I ask you as a Montanan with disability to understand that people with disabilities need and want to participate in how we access the healthcare delivery system. I would like to be understood as a partner in my health care choices and not as a case load number to be taken care of. I encourage you to fund and expand home and community based health care services throughout Montana